

Application No. 09/893,315
Amendment dated
Reply to Office Action of September 9, 2005

Docket No.: 291958161US

REMARKS

Claims 54-59, 65, 66, 69-83, 85-87, 94-113, 115-120, 123-128, 131-135, 138-148, 150-155, 158-164, 170-173, 176-189, 191 and 196 are presently pending in this application. Please note that claims 197-200 are not pending in this application in contrast to the listing of pending claims set forth in this Office Action. Claims 69 and 70 have been amended in this paper to correct minor informalities.

The status of the application in light of the Office Action dated 9 September 2005, is as follows:

(A) The specification was subject to an objection regarding the priority claim.

(B) Claims 69 and 70 were subject to an objection as depending from a cancelled claim.

(C) Claims 54-59, 65, 66, 69-83, 85-87, 94-113, 115-120, 123-128, 131-135, 138-148, 150-155, 158-164, 170-173, 176-189 and 196-200 were indicated as being rejected.

A. Response to the Objections to the Specification

The specification was objected to on the grounds that the priority claim appears to be incorrect. More specifically, the Examiner states "U.S. Patent 5,235,995 appears to be a continuation or continuation-in-part of applications not referenced in the first line."

The applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner. The priority claim set forth in the first paragraph of the Substitute Specification filed in Appendix A of the Preliminary Amendment dated 3 October 2001 clearly sets forth that U.S. Patent No. 5,235,995 is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 07/526,243 (now U.S. Patent No. 5,168,887). As such, the priority claim set forth in the Preliminary Amendment dated 3 October 2001 is correct. The applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this objection.

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B. Response to Objections to the Claims

Claims 69 and 70 were objected to on the grounds that they depend from a cancelled claim. The Examiner is correct. Claim 69 has accordingly been amended to depend from claim 54, and claim 70 has been amended to depend from claim 69. The amendments to claims 69 and 70 are not narrowing amendments made for the purposes of patentability.

C. Response to Purported Claim Rejections

The Examiner indicated that the pending claims were rejected in the list on the continuation of the Office Action Summary sheet. However, no substantive rejection of these claims was set forth in the Office Action. Therefore, with the exception of claims 69 and 70, the applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims listed on the Disposition of Claims in the Office Action should have been identified as having been allowed.

In light of the foregoing, all of the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and a timely mailing of a Notice of Allowance. If Examiner Koch has any questions, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (206) 359-3258.

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Respectfully submitted,

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